

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This response is made to the Office Action of May 11, 2004. In response to the Examiner's treatment of claims 1-4 and 6-8 as an "election without traverse", Applicants have canceled claims 5, 9 and 10.

Claims 1-4 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by the Kanesaka reference, U.S. Patent No. 5,911,754. With the amendment made herein, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As can be seen in the claims, the flexible links are designed and claimed so that the struts or "end legs" of the Z-shaped link lie generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the stent. This can be seen in the configuration presented throughout the specification.

Naturally, this disclosure is not found in Kanesaka. As the Examiner points out, if one considers the element "5" of Kanesaka as a flexible link, in no way do any of the legs extend along the longitudinal axis of the stent. As has been readily described in the current specification, since the strut legs of the links lie parallel to the longitudinal axis, these strut legs provide greater flexibility to the stent, while maintaining the overall compact structure of the link for emplacement into the body.

Accordingly, it is earnestly that not only do the amended claims overcome the rejection under § 102(b), but in no way can the current claims be considered to render the claims obvious under 35 USC § 103.

Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 6-8 are allowable any of the art. A Notice indicating their Allowability is respectfully requested. If the Examiner would like to contact Applicant's

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attorney to speed allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to do so at the below listed phone number or e-mail address.

Respectfully submitted,

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